Nontraditional Student Graduates with Highest Honors

Distinctive is the best way to describe David Rueppel, a nontraditional student graduating this May from Millersville University. Majoring in anthropology with a concentration in archaeology, with a minor in history, Rueppel will be completing his undergraduate college career suma cum laude holding a 4.0 GPA. Along with having a family, Rueppel maintains his academic performance while living with a mild case of Savant Syndrome. Savant Syndrome is classified as a form of autism, where people who are labeled as Savants are considered to have lower levels of intelligence but display exceptional talent or ability in a particular area.

Rueppel transferred to Millersville University from Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) in the fall of 2010. “The finest people I ever met in my life have been at Millersville. I’ve been challenged here,” said Rueppel. He also credits his professors Dr. Timothy Trussell, archaeology, and Dr. Justin Garcia, anthropology, for helping guide his journey through Millersville University as a nontraditional student. As these two professors learned Rueppel’s personal story, a friendship developed.

Rueppel and his mother moved to Lancaster from Lebanon, Pa., and he attended Milton Hershey School for boys in his youth. His relationship with his mother grew more dysfunctional, and she would always address Rueppel’s childhood ambitions with pessimism. Struggling to maintain familial ties with his mother and his stepfather, at the age of 15 Rueppel decided to run away from home. As a result, he found himself heavily involved with illegal activities in order to survive.

It wasn’t until he met his soon-to-be wife Victoria when he was 17 that he began to turn his life around. Rueppel and Victoria have five children, and he stated that he “wouldn’t trade fatherhood for anything.” “My wife,” said Rueppel, “forced me to make lifestyle changes, because of how she brought a dimension of peace and happiness to my soul.”

After receiving his bachelor’s degree on May 18 at Millersville, Rueppel will attend the Evangelical School of Theology in Myerstown, Pa., for graduate studies. “Millersville University has done its job well,” said Rueppel. I would recommend this institution to anyone. I will always be a Marauder, and I will represent this University wherever I go.”
Millersville Professors and Students to Study Hazardous Lake-effect Snow Bands

Weather forecasts will be better in the future, thanks to the work of two Millersville University professors, Dr. Todd Sikora and Dr. Richard Clark, earth sciences. Millersville University received a $387,738 National Science Foundation (NSF) grant to study lake-effect snow events downwind of the Great Lakes. The corresponding field project—Ontario Winter Lake-effect Systems (OWLeS)—is scheduled for December 2013 through January 2014.

The OWLeS project is unique because it will involve approximately 35 undergraduate students from several institutions, including 12 from Millersville. “This presents extensive opportunities for undergraduate students to participate in cutting-edge research, from data collection in the field to coauthoring peer-reviewed publications,” said Sikora. “Our research on the processes that lead to intense and persistent downwind lake-effect systems will result in better corresponding weather forecasts, thus mitigating those impacts. This research becomes more urgent in a warming global climate, as boreal lakes are expected to remain ice-free for longer periods of time, leading to a longer lake-effect season.”

The OWLeS project will analyze the atmospheric processes associated with persistent and intense lake-effect systems in the area around Lake Ontario. The data collection will be at unprecedented detail, using an instrumented aircraft and multiple surface-based instruments. The OWLeS project focuses on Lake Ontario because of its size and orientation, the local orography, the climatological frequency of its lake-effect systems and the degree of Lake Ontario lake-effect system hazards on public safety and commerce.

Clark and Sikora will be collaborating with scientists from the University of Illinois, Penn State University and Hobart and William Smith Colleges.

Millersville Named One of the Top “Green” Colleges

Approximately 50 percent of the campus grounds at Millersville University are maintained organically. This is just one of the reasons Millersville University has earned a spot in the Princeton Review’s Guide to 322 Green Colleges for its sustainability efforts and environmental initiatives.
Of 806 schools that were tallied for green rating scores in 2012, the 322 schools in this guide received scores of 83 or higher. The guide profiles 322 institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada that demonstrate notable commitments to sustainability in their academic offerings, campus infrastructure, activities and career preparation.

Millersville’s “green” highlights included Millersville’s partnership with Oregon Dairy Organics and Edie Waste Systems to develop a recycling program to convert organic waste into high-quality compost to benefit waste within Millersville’s dining and conference services. The goal is to recycle 70 percent of organic waste.

Additional “green highlights” include the Millersville University Center for Environmental Sciences and the mandatory recycling policy the University has had in place since 1990. Millersville was also honored in the Princeton Review’s Guide to 286 Green Colleges in 2010, the Princeton Review’s Guide to 311 Green Colleges in 2011 and the Princeton Review’s Guide to 322 Green Colleges in 2012.


Honors and Awards Convocation

A long standing tradition at Millersville University, the annual Honors and Awards Convocation celebrates the achievements of undergraduate students, alumni and programs.

The 55th annual convocation will recognize individuals for their academic achievements, service involvement and athletic achievements. The Millersville University Alumni Association will present four major awards: the Distinguished Alumni Award, Honorary Alumni Award, Outstanding Volunteer Service Award and the Young Alumni Achievement Award.

The four recipients this year are:
Dr. Melvin Allen ’69 has been named the 2013 Distinguished Alumni Award recipient. This award, established in 1971, is given to a living alumni member. For almost 40 years Millersville was his home. While a student he founded the Black Student Union, an organization still active on campus. Allen was a professor in the Department of Philosophy from 1969 – 2011. He also spearheaded the University’s Civic and Community Engagement and Research initiative from its inception in 2006.

Dr. Keith Mellinger ’95 has been named the 2013 Young Alumni Achievement Award recipient. Mellinger received his bachelor’s degree in mathematics from Millersville University. Currently, he is an associate professor of mathematics and the chair of the Department of Mathematics at the University of Mary Washington in Fredericksburg, Va. Mellinger is the recipient of many internal grants and a Jepson Fellowship from the University of Mary Washington, and in 2006 he was awarded a young investigator grant from the National Security Agency. In 2010, Mellinger and a Virginia Tech colleague received the Carl B. Allendoerfer Award, a national writing award, from the Mathematical Association of America.

Dr. Francine G. McNairy, 13th president of Millersville University, was named the 2013 Honorary Alumni Award recipient. Appointed president in 2003, McNairy served as the chief executive officer with oversight of a $167 million budget, 1,000 employees and 8,368 undergraduate and graduate students. Throughout her career, McNairy has been dedicated to public higher education, the growth and development of students, multiculturalism and civic engagement. She has championed faculty and student diversity, global education, economic development within the Lancaster region, accountability and transparency within and external to the University. She retired from the University in January 2013.

Dr. Stephen Kepchar, Jr. ’70 has been named the 2013 Outstanding Volunteer Service Award recipient. An economics graduate of Millersville University, Kepchar was involved in three successive capital campaigns at Millersville, most recently chairing the Soar to Greatness capital campaign cabinet. Kepchar joined Morgan Stanley Wealth Management in the Lancaster office in 1973, where he is now a senior vice president and wealth advisor. He has more than 40 years of experience in the financial services industry. He has been active in the community, serving on the board of directors of Student Lodging, Inc., the advisory board of Hospice of Lancaster County and as president of Lancaster Sales and Marketing Executives.
This event will be held on Saturday, May 4, at 10 a.m. in Marauder Court at the Student Memorial Center and is by invitation only.

**Keeping Out the Hackers**

Scenario: You have just been hired as the network/security administrator taking control of all information systems, which you know little about and have limited time to familiarize yourself. In the midst of all the commotion, you have to keep up with the needs of the business and user demands while maintaining service level agreements for all critical Internet services.

This was day one of the 2013 National Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition (CCDC), attended by students of Millersville University’s Cyber Security Team. The competition was held from April 19-21 in San Antonio, Texas.

Rochester Institute of Technology took home the 2013 National CCDC Championship, while Millersville University’s Cyber Security Team is the 2013 Mid-Atlantic Collegiate Cyber Defense Competition Champion.

“Throughout the competition, the teams have to ensure that systems supply the specified services while under attack from the ‘Red Team’ (hackers),” said Todd Echertling, Millersville’s Cyber Security Team coach. “In addition, the teams have to satisfy periodic ‘injects’ that simulate business activities that information technology staff must deal with in the real world.”

Although the Millersville University students did not place at this year’s national competition, the students worked very hard to prepare. “The field is growing so rapidly, it is difficult, no matter how well you prepare for the competition; the professional hackers (red team) will still get into our networks,” said Travis Romero, team captain and senior computer science major.

The other computer science students on the team include: seniors, Andrew Elliot, Martin Zirkle, Josh Van Hine and Grant Blankenship; juniors, Dylan Leakway, Keat Ly and Ryan Butler and sophomore, Mark Schmele.

**MU Honors Students Lead Conference**

On Monday, April 15, Millersville University’s Honors College hosted the PASSHE Honors Student Development Conference at the Dixon University Center in Harrisburg. Nearly 75 undergraduate honors students from across the State System participated in a day of networking, advocacy and panel discussions devoted to “best practices” in academic, social and community
engagement. The conference was supported by PASSHE and the Office of the Chancellor, and it was held in conjunction with the spring meeting of the PASSHE Honors Directors Council.

From start to finish, the entire program was student-centered and student-directed. Emily C. Neideigh, a Millersville Honors sophomore, chaired the planning committee that worked closely with peers from other campuses to define issues of common concern. “The conference was a great opportunity for the students from the 14 state schools to get together and discuss issues relevant to each of their honors programs,” said Neideigh. A dozen other Millersville students played vital roles in crafting the agenda, organizing registration, and facilitating sessions.

On the 15th, a dozen Millersville Honors college students journeyed to Harrisburg to join their colleagues for strategy sessions dedicated to academic standards, integrating study abroad to honors curricula, student governance, mentoring and alumni involvement, community-building, and promoting statewide advocacy, among other topics. Dr. Dennis B. Downey, director of the MU Honors College, accompanied the students.

“It was great to see the continuous interaction and listen to the really well formed ideas about community building and academic excellence within PASSHE being proposed by students,” Downey said. “I was especially proud that Millersville students had taken the leadership role and that our University administration demonstrated strong support for their efforts.”

MU students who participated: Emily Neideigh, Daniel Lipson, Rachel Kunicki, Betsy Hernandez, Emily Yost, Amy Parker, Erin Runyon, Benjamin Shoff, Emily Lazar, Brittany Tomes, Jordan Weller, Cassie Werth, Chesley Wirth and Allison Breiner.

New Alumni Board Members

The Millersville University Alumni Association recently held spring elections. The newly elected board members will serve two-year terms that will run July 1, 2013 - June 30, 2015. The new members include:


The Millersville University Alumni Board of Directors consists of 19 voting members and meets quarterly. Additional board members include: Lori Dierolf ’91 (President), Scott Bailey ’96 (President Elect), Stephen Focht ’70 (Treasurer), Cassandra Karamanos ’94 (Secretary), Jerri Anne Johnson ’76/’87M (Immediate Past-President), John Held ’02, Kristin Waters ’05, Jennifer Bertolet ’92, Sandra Brown ’76, Nathan Claycomb ’01, Jenna Craig ’10, Bill Dewan ’93, Kitty Glass ’53, Greg Ortleib ’09, Dan Sidelnick ’75, Carroll Staub ’72/’90M.

The Millersville University Alumni Association, founded in 1861, consists of more than 64,000 living alumni in all 50 U.S. states and 36 countries across the globe. For additional information on alumni events, programs and services, visit the Alumni Association.

**Millersville University 2013 Retirees**

On April 4, several Millersville University employees were honored at this year’s Retirement Recognition Program. The event was held in the Lehr Dining Room of the Bolger Conference Center at 4 p.m. The following retirees served 25 years or more at the University:

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<td>Diane Black</td>
<td>Communications and Marketing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan Wimer</td>
<td>Technical Assistance Center</td>
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<td>Dr. Aida Ceara</td>
<td>Academic and Student Development</td>
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<td>Dr. Muhammad Chaudhary</td>
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<td>Larry Eshleman</td>
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<td>Elaine Gehman</td>
<td>University Services</td>
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<td>Esther Montano</td>
<td>Wellness and Sport Sciences</td>
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<td>Henry Manning</td>
<td>Information Systems Services</td>
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<td>Dawn Reese</td>
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<td>Neal Fisher</td>
<td>University Services</td>
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<td>Dr. Carol Heintzelman</td>
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<td>Eva McNickle</td>
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<td>Kevin Funk</td>
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<td>Adele Ruszak</td>
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<td>Kenneth Hess</td>
<td>Maintenance Operations</td>
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<td>Dr. Ralph Anttonen</td>
<td>Academic and Student Development</td>
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Also recognized at the ceremony were the following retirees: William Boyer, Cathrine Dunn, Victoria Egge, Michael Fischer and Gary Myers, maintenance operations; Thelma Eckerd, library; Diane Fleishman, experiential learning and career management; Darlene Keemer, elementary and early childhood education; Dr. Francine McNairy, president; Dianne O’Connor, alumni services; Deborah Pizzola, human resources and Dr. Victoria Weaver, art and design.

Need to Know

President’s Inauguration

Millersville University of Pennsylvania
Established in 1855
Is proud to announce the selection of its
14th President
John M. Anderson, Ph.D.
Effective April 1, 2013
Inauguration Date: Friday, October 25, 2013

Need to Know

The 4th Annual Herbarium Open House

The Millersville University James C. Parks Herbarium, Department of Biology, invites the public and the University community to the 4th annual Herbarium Open House on Wednesday, May 15, 2013 at 6-9 p.m., in the Herbarium, Room 270, in Roddy Science Center. This year will showcase undergraduate botanical research in the Herbarium. Nanette Raczka, biology ’12, will present her ethnobotanical findings from her recent trip to study potato
diversity and cultivation in the Peruvian Andes. Nathan Hartley, biology ’13, will present an update on his floristic inventory of Ranatra Pond near Safe Harbor Dam. Additionally, Chris Hardy, keeper of the Herbarium, will be available to answer questions about the Herbarium. Light refreshments will be served.

5/2/13 Activities

Here are the faculty and staff activities for May 2, 2013.

Faculty and Staff Activities

Dr. Sharon Brusic, applied engineering, safety and technology, became the 37th recipient and first female to receive the Academy of Fellows Award on March 9 at the 75th annual International Technology & Engineering Educators Association (ITEEA) in Columbus, Ohio. This is the highest recognition that ITEEA can bestow upon any person. The award is given to an individual who has gained prominence in and brought honor to the profession of technology and engineering education.

Laurie B. Hanich, educational foundations, recently published an empirical research article with colleagues Michele Mazzocco, Gwen Myers, Katie Lewis and Melissa Murphy. The article, "Limited Knowledge of Fraction Representations Differentiates Middle School Students with Mathematics Learning Disability (dyscalculia) v. Low Mathematics Achievement," is published in The Journal of Experimental Child Psychology.


Dr. Cynthia Taylor, mathematics, co-authored "Bingo! Select Games for Mathematical Thinking" in Mathematics Teaching in the Middle School, March 2013, which is available at National Council of Teachers of Mathematics. In addition, she gave an invited lecture titled "Examining Elementary Mathematics Teacher Educators' Practices" at the Eastern Pennsylvania and Delaware Section of the Mathematical Association of America Spring Meeting (EPaDel) in
Carlisle, Pa., on April 6. The presentation focused on identifying instructional practices that mathematics educators use in their content and methods courses to provide opportunities for their students to learn about the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics.

Obituary:

Nathan Weiss, age 90, formerly of East Hempfield Township, and president emeritus of Kean University, died on April 9. Weiss taught at Millersville University and was the husband of Dr. Bernice R. Rydell, vice president for finance and administration emerita at Millersville University.

Who Makes Millersville Special

This issue of Who Makes Millersville Special features Seth Taylor, groundskeeper supervisor.

Q: Where are you from?
A: I was born and raised in Lancaster County in the Lampeter/Willow St. area.

Q: Where were you educated? What did you study?
A: I went to Lampeter-Strasburg High School, where I graduated in 1995. I then attended Harrisburg Area Community College, where I received my associate’s degree.

Q: When did you begin working at Millersville University?
A: I started here on February 14, 2010. Being that it was Valentine’s Day, it is an easy date to remember!

Q: What are your responsibilities as the groundskeeper supervisor?
A: The grounds department is responsible for the entire campus plus the outside of all the University buildings. We handle all mowing, mulching, trimming, pruning, trash, leaf and snow
removal and just about anything else that pops up. But to me, a supervisor or manager does much more than just assign work and make sure it’s completed to set standard. A manager must be a teacher, student, coach, player, mentor, orator, therapist and a disciplinarian.

Q: What does a typical day consist of at the office?

A: We begin each day with morning meetings before we break off into our assigned areas. Much of what we do is dictated by the seasons, so jobs frequently change. The one constant is trying to keep an overall clean appearance at the campus.

Q: What grounds are you responsible for on campus?

A: As most of you know, we have a very large campus. We manage all the grounds from Centennial Drive over to Cottage Avenue and from George and Prince Streets. This includes all athletic fields and the University owned houses.

Q: Can you list some of the everyday problems you encounter in terms of grounds-keeping?

A: Student safety is always our biggest concern. But most of our normal problems that crop up have to do with trash and recycling. However, each season brings different problems.

Q: How did you enter this line of work?

A: I started my landscaping career when I was 15 years old. I was looking for work close to my parents’ house, so I could ride my bike to work. The only place close was Meadia Heights Golf Club. One summer there, and I knew working outside was for me. Yet the following summer, I worked in an office setting just to make sure. What I found was, eight hours inside felt like 16, and eight hours outside really felt like four. From that point on, I knew grounds work was in my future.

Q: How many years of landscaping do you have?

A: I have been working in the landscaping field in one way or another for the last 20 years.

Q: What do you love most about groundskeeping? What do you dislike?

A: Because most of what we do is dictated by the seasons, our work is always changing. Each season brings with it new jobs and challenges. So what that means for the grounds worker is that as you tire of doing one job, the seasons change and that brings with it a whole new job that needs to be done. It really keeps things fresh and interesting. The downside to the seasons is the temperature changes we have to work through. Extreme heat and cold seem to bother me more as I get older.

Q: What is your favorite tool to use?
A: Probably a mower. I enjoy the accuracy in striping the grass with the mower. Also, I like the mower because you use it over every square inch of ground, allowing you to see things in the campus that would otherwise go unnoticed. Plus, it’s just you and the mower, which gives you plenty of time to think.

Q: How do you prepare for potential storms?

A: Depending on the type of weather event predicted, we usually get specific pieces of equipment ready. We also set up work schedules, depending on the time the event begins. After those things are done and in place, we just monitor the situation and wait.

Q: Where did you work before Millersville?

A: I was the grounds superintendant for the Murry Companies for seven years.

Q: When not working, what is your favorite thing to do?

A: Spending time with friends and family.

Q: Do you have any hobbies?

A: Sports! Watching. Coaching. Playing. I have been playing hockey now for 30 years, still play hoops and have just recently taken up golf. Coaching my children and their friends has been pretty rewarding, as well.

Q: What are some of your favorite movies?


Q: Please complete this sentence. People would be surprised to know that I…

A: I love to read; I love to learn.